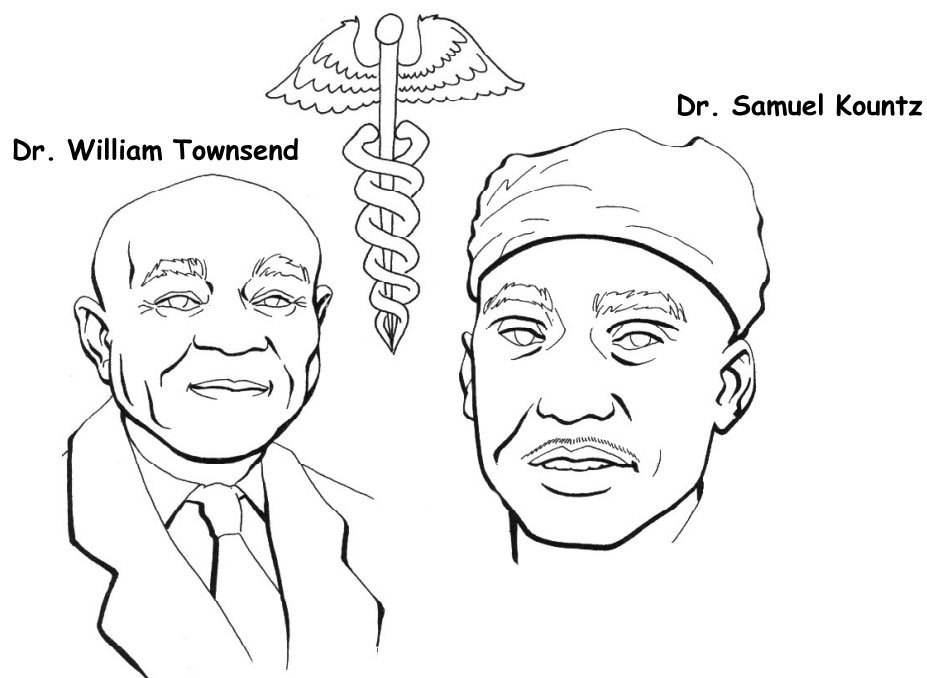


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Dr. William H. Townsend was born in 1914 and was raised in Earle. He was the first licensed African American optometrist in Arkansas. As well, he became one of the first African Americans in the Arkansas State Legislature in 80 years with his election in 1972 to the House of Representatives, where he served for 24 years. During the Central High crisis, Dr. Townsend was a founding member of the Council of Human Relations and Council on Community Affairs, organizations that promote civil rights.

Dr. Samuel Kountz, born in 1930 and a native of Lexa in Phillips County, was the country's first African American transplant surgeon. In 1959 he participated in the first West Coast kidney transplant and his research led him to discover how to improve the rejection of transplanted kidneys, which helped to extend the lives of his patients. He performed hundreds of kidney transplants during his lifetime.

